

there were no impossibilities, which did not languish in the long lapse of time, which was more vigorous in the decrepitude of age than in the buoyancy of youth, and flourished more luxuriantly in the absence of probability than in its presence, became the type and pattern of saving faith for all time to come, the kind of faith which is imputed to us for righteousness. A study of the characteristics of the Abrahamic faith may be greatly useful in strengthening the foundations of the Christian life, and a far better analysis than we are able to give may be found in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. But the observing may discern in the more modern documents of contemporaneous Christian lives a vivid illustration of the Abrahamic faith, and a moment's reflection will present the impressive picture of that old bedouin chieftain, away back in the dim distance of history, when the traces of the flood had not yet vanished from the earth, receiving in his heart and cherishing in his life the seed germs of that highest civilization which illuminates our own times, and expands with promise of deliverance and glory in the ages to come. There is no wonder at the universal meed of greatness which is accorded to this grand old man silhouetted on the far distant horizon of the world's history.

It is a well known fact that the fame of the most gifted, the most forceful and distinguished of men begins to fade as soon as the influence of his life or the destiny for which he was "raised up" has reached its ultimate limits. As soon as the work is finished the worker begins to disappear in the vanishing perspective of history. But by this rule the fame of Abraham must yet receive a larger expansion in the evolution of that destiny which is yet shrouded in the mysterious language of prophecy. "A father of many nations in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed," a consummation which is yet in the future, completing when it shall come to pass the slowly ascending pyramid of human destiny and human happiness, with the immortal figure of Abraham standing sublime upon its sunlit apex.

#### THE LORD'S SUPPER. No. 3.

G. W. RENCH

What if such expressions as "his own supper," "he was sitting at meat," "your eating," etc., does show that they were partaking of a real supper? Says one, "Paul says in the very chapter from which you were quoting, 'This is not to eat the Lord's supper.' And then on a little farther he says, 'Have ye not houses to eat and drink in?' Don't Paul settle the entire question by forbidding the eating of a meal in the church?" Well, let us see. I do not believe that any one who makes this argument will stand by it. Paul does say, "When ye

come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper." But if these words forbid the eating of what we call the Lord's supper they forbid the eating of anything called the Lord's supper. Then away goes the bread and cup—what others call the Lord's supper. They dare not have even a spiritual Lord's supper, if that is what Paul means. The fact is the objection does for these unthinking people just what they don't want done. It takes away the Lord's supper, *whatever it is*. Of course, Paul does not say such a thing as that.

What is Paul rebuking, their eating together or their disorderly manner of *not eating together*? Array before your mind *the facts* as brought out in his own words and then you can see on whom his condemnation falls, if you want to.

In I Cor. 11: 20 (R. V.) we have, "When therefore ye assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper: (Notice why.) for in your eating each one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken." Verse 33: "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another. If any man is hungry, let him eat at home." From these scriptures notice (1) There were factions among them. Verse 19.

(2) Some ate before others. Verse 21.

(3) Some drank before others. Verse 21.

(4) Those who got nothing to eat were left hungry.

(5) Those who were left out were poor, having no houses, or nothing.

(6) These poor members by such conduct (eating before them) were put to shame. Verse 22.

See the two groups? The one, gluttonous and making merry; the other, the poor, crowded out without any show of respect whatever, and yet their brethren. No wonder it was not "possible to eat the Lord's supper."

Now, the mistake that so many make, even among our own people, is, that when they consider Paul's reproof they do not keep in mind these two factions. They apply the reproof alike to saint and sinner, to those who were not allowed to eat as well as those who were taking "before others their own supper." Indeed I have read debates in which the disputants did not discriminate a particle between those who needed censure and got it and those who were not permitted to eat at all and were thus free from criticism. So, when Paul says, "What! have ye not houses to eat and drink in?" he cannot be reproving those poor who had been prevented from eating. How could he, when he asks almost in the same breath, "Will you put those to shame who have not houses?" He does not say a word

to those who had been trying to do right about eating at home. He tells those who were acting as though they could wait no longer on these poor that they had better eat at home. When he says in the 34th verse, "If any man is hungry let him eat at home," he can not mean both factions. Why would Paul rebuke those who had desired to eat but were prevented by the greedy actions of their brethren? The reproof was, certainly for those who needed it, namely, those who took "before other his own supper." Again, in the 21st verse, Paul gives as a result of this hurried eating, that one is hungry and another drunken. The one faction by being crowded back was left hungry. Does Paul mean that these should eat at home when he had just reminded the greedy faction *that they had no home*, or as the margin reads, "had nothing?" Don't you see that we must put Paul's censure where it belongs; not upon the whole membership, but upon those who deprived a portion of the membership from eating the Lord's supper.

Finally, after correcting their abuse of this meal and setting them right on the communion, the bread and cup, he says (Verse 33) "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another." Do you see any force in the word "when?" "When ye come together to eat," means that they were *not* to come together to eat, does it? When you read this chapter, put Paul's reproof where it belongs; means *not* to read it, does it?

When you get well, come to visit us, means *not* to visit us, does it?

If this verse does not show that Paul expected the Christians to come together to eat in the future, then words mean nothing. Every commentary that I have ever read or saw quoted, speaks of the meal or love-feasts of the early Christians.

#### MATURE MINISTERS

C. H. WETHERBE

These are rejected by a number of churches. They demand quite young men. Perhaps this is largely owing to the wishes of the young people of the churches. There is altogether too much deference paid to the young people in the churches. In many instances they rule the churches. The consequence is, the solid spirituality of the churches is kept in a small compass. There is a good deal of religious hustling, but a comparatively little of deep spiritual power and work. The Holy Spirit must be sorely grieved at the attitude of those churches that despise ministers who are fifty years old, yet are strong, able and very effective men and servants of God. The editor of the *Christian Evangelist*, in referring to ministers that are somewhat past fifty years of age, says: "We are